

Message Text

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TAGS: ELAB, ILO, CA

SUBJECT: CANADAIN VOTE ON PLO OBSERVER STATUS AT ILO

1. DURING HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATE JUNE 17 JOHN DIEFENBAKER
OF PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION ASKED HOW GOC VOTED
ON GRANTING OBSERVER STATUS TO PLO AT ILO CONFERENCE.

EXTAFF MIN MACEACHEN REPLIED:

QUOTE. ... THE QUESTION OF THE VOTES THAT WERE POLLED
AT THE ILO WITH RESPECT TO THE PLO WERE THE SUBJECT OF
INSTRUCTIONS WHICH I ISSUED TO THE DELEGATIN EARLY LAST
WEEK OR MAYBE A FEW DAYS BEFORE THAT. THERE WERE TWO
MAJOR RESOLUTIONS, ONE A COMBINED RESOLUTION CALLING
FOR THE ADMISSION OF AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS AND
THE PLO TO ATTEND AS OBSERVERS AT THE ILO. ON THAT
RESOLUTION CANADA ABSTAINED. A SECOND RESOLUTION WAS
PROPOSED BY THE WORKERS' GROUPS--CANADA, AUSTRALIA AND
THE UNITED STATES, I BELIEVE--WHICH STIPULATED THAT
NO OBSERVER GROUP COULD ATTEND THE DELIBERATIONS OF
THE ILO UNLESS IT RECOGNIZED THE EXISTENCE OF ALL
MEMBER STATES. CANADA VOTED IN SUPPORT OF THAT
RESOLUTION, WHICH UNFORTUNATELY WAS NOT CARRIED BY
THE ORGANIZATION ITSELF. IT WAS A RESOLUTION WHICH
WAS INTENDED TO ASSERT CANADA'S INTEREST IN THE
CONTINUED INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL

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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 02292 192215Z

AS A STATE, AND AN INDICATION THAT WE EXPECTED ALL WHO

WOULD JOIN THE DELIBERATIONS AT THE ILO WOULD ACCEPT
THAT FACT, INCLUDING THE PLO ITSELF. END QYOTE.

2. IN MORE BROADLY FRAMED FOLLOW-UP QUESTION CONCERNING
GOC MIDDLE EAST POLICY Diefenbaker asked whether
"THIS ABSTENTION HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE DESIRE
ON THE PART OF THE CANADAIN GOVERNMENT TO DO NOTHING
WHICH MIGHT ANNOY THE PLO OR THE ARAB NATIONS."

3. SIGNIFICANT EXCERPTS OF MACEACHEN'S RESPONSE FOLLOW:
QUOTE: WE HAVE ALWAYS STATED THAT THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT
FEELS THAT THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE SHOULD BE REPRESENTED,
FOR EXAMPLE, AT DELIBERATIONS WHICH HAVE A BEARING ON
THE FUTURE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST. I BELIEVE
THAT POSITION WOULD BE SUPPORTED BY MOST HON. MEMBERS,
IF NOT ALL HON. MEMBERS, IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. BUT
WE REFUSE TO TAKE THE POSITION THAT THE PLO ITSELF
SHOULD BE THE ONLY AND LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. THAT IS WHY, ON THESE
PARTICULAR RESOLUTIONS WHICH INVOLVE TWO ASPECTS,
NAMELY, THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND
THE PLO AS AN ORGANIZATION, WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY
ABSTAINED. WE HAVE BEEN IN EXTREMELY GOOD COMPANY
IN THAT ABSTENTION. END QUOTE.
PORTER

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